



Information for Educators

What is the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities (WAA-SwD)?

The WAA-SwD assesses academic progress of students with significant cognitive disabilities. Instruction for these students is based upon the Wisconsin Extended Grade Band Standards (http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_assmt-extstd) and the Common Core Essential Elements (http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/sped_assmt-ccee). This assessment measures achievement in science and social studies in grades 4, 8, and 10 through a multiple-choice format.

Which students are eligible to take the WAA-SwD?

When determining whether a student who is eligible for special education services should participate in the WAA-SwD or the WKCE, the student's IEP team must determine whether the student meets the following criteria.

When does WAA-SwD testing take place?

The WAA-SwD will be administered
October 27-November 7, 2014.

Participation Criteria:

1. The student has a significant cognitive disability.
2. The student is primarily being instructed using the Extended Grade Band Standards and the Common Core Essential Elements as content standards.
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.

Decision-making Don'ts:

Decisions for determining participation in the alternate assessment **must not** be based solely on any of the following:

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| 1. A disability category or label | 8. English Language Learner (ELL) status |
| 2. Poor attendance or extended absences | 9. Low reading level/achievement level |
| 3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference | 10. Anticipated student's disruptive behavior |
| 4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment | 11. Impact of student scores on accountability system |
| 5. Academic and other services student receives | 12. Administrator decision |
| 6. Educational environment or instructional setting | 13. Anticipated emotional distress |
| 7. Percent of time receiving special education | 14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/Augmentative and Alternative Communication) to participate in assessment process |

IEP Forms

IEP teams utilize the Wisconsin Alternate Assessment for Students with Disabilities Participation Checklist (Form I-7-A - <http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/doc/form-i7a.doc>) and the Individualized Education Program: Participation in Statewide Assessments Form (Form I-7 - <http://sped.dpi.wi.gov/files/sped/doc/form-i7waa.doc>) to document their decisions.

How long does it take to administer the WAA-SwD?

The WAA-SwD is **not** a timed test. Each student is administered the test on an individual basis. A student may take the test over several days, as long as it is completed within the testing window. The total time required to administer the test varies; however, it is estimated to take one hour.

Who can administer the WAA-SwD?

Test administrators are required to be licensed professionals familiar with the response style of each student for whom the test is being administered. Test administrators are also required to be trained through the DPI provided PowerPoint Training or through a district provided training. Training modules can be found at <http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/assessment/WAA>.

What type of scores will be provided?

The WAA-SwD provides information about what students know and can do in relation to the Wisconsin established Extended Grade Band Standards in Science. Students receive scores based on their performance.

- **WAA-SwD Advanced** - Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the academic content and skills tested on the WAA-SwD at that grade. Requires no support in instructional settings to demonstrate consistent understanding and mastery of the content and skills included in the Extended Grade Band Standards.
- **WAA-SwD Proficient** - Demonstrates understanding of the academic content and skills tested on the WAA-SwD at that grade. Requires no support in instructional settings to demonstrate understanding and mastery of the content and skills included in the Extended Grade Band Standards.
- **WAA-SwD Basic** - Demonstrates some understanding of the academic content and skills tested on the WAA-SwD at that grade. Requires some support in instructional settings to demonstrate understanding of the contents and skills included in the Extended Grade Band Standards.
- **WAA-SwD Minimal Performance** - Demonstrates an emerging understanding of the academic content and skills tested on the WAA-SwD at that grade. Requires significant support in instructional settings to demonstrate understanding of the content and skills included in the Extended Grade Band Standards.

Where can I find sample or practice test questions?

Sample test questions are available at <http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/assessment/WAA>. These questions are similar to actual test questions that may be asked on the WAA-SwD. Current WAA-SwD test questions are not released.

More information

Visit <http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/assessment/WAA>

How are test results used?

The WAA-SwD test results provide information about student achievement. To obtain a more complete picture, daily class work, other test results, homework, and other learning activities should be considered.

Classroom and School Use:

- The DPI encourages an active dialogue with teachers and counselors about how the WAA-SwD information can be used to help your child meet individual educational goals.

School District Use:

- Test results to improve educational programs.

Department of Public Instruction Uses:

- To meet its legal requirement of identifying low-performing schools as determined by s. 115.38(4), Wis Stats.;
- To meet the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requirements of using high-quality assessments to determine how well students are learning;
- To meet the federal Title I (NCLB) requirement to determine adequate progress in Title I schools; and
- To determine the extent to which schools and districts across the state meet the Wisconsin proficiency standards.